Electronic Emitter
Feb. 1999

Date sent: Thu, 28 Jan 1999 22:27:07 -0500
To: kcs@rx.uga.edu (Ken Schroder N4NFI), albecker@negia.net (Al
Becker WA2RPV),
berrin@bellsouth.net (Bob Herrin KE4JLL),
richards@athens.net (Bob Richards AA4AI),
koehler@sunchem.chem.uga.edu (Brian Koehler KE4TYQ),
kf4gjq@arches.uga.edu (Charles Fortner KF4GJQ),
cmeadows@arches.uga.edu (Chris Meadows KC4RWF),
cbertaut@wizard.net (Christopher Bertaut KU4FT),
dalper@negia.net (Dave Alper KD4STZ),
dcrowell@arches.uga.edu (Debbie Crowell KD4JPE),
dbullard@negia.net (Don Bullard WA4IML), kb6rrx@juno.com (Doug KB6RRX),
w4law@mindspring.com (Doug Woodruff W4LAW),
emfsys@bellsouth.net (Ed Fuqua N4VHA),
edriddle@negia.net (Ed Riddle N4ALE),
erollor@rx.uga.edu (Ed Rollor N4ZRA),
k4pym@carol.net (George Allgood K4PYM),
glhutch@negia.net (George Hutchinson N8MKE),
wb4vnt@negia.net (George Kelley WB4VNT),
gbrooks@waltonemc.com (Greg Brooks N4ULL),
ignacy@uga.cc.uga.edu (Ignacy Misztal NO9E),
jlreeves@mindspring.com (James Reeves KF4AQO),
tjstrick@arches.uga.edu (Jason Strickland KD4DTT),
twstrick@arches.uga.edu (Tommy Strickland KD4DTV),
jpryor@uga.cc.uga.edu (Jay Pryor K4OGG),
jlondere@carol.net (Joe Londeree AF4ED),
hess@negia.net (John Hess KB4NUC),
jhawkins@mindspring.com (Jim Hawkins KF4RX),
kdaniels@negia.net (Ken Daniels WB4QII),
cole15@nationwide.com (Larry Cole N4IWP),
becham@mindspring.com (Lee Becham KD4NTS),
lmurchison@athens.net (Lillie Murchison WB4BUK),
matkins@uga.cc.uga.edu (Marvin Atkins KE4TYS),
covington@mindspring.com (Michael Covington N4TMI),
dbasinge@arches.uga.edu (Mike Basinger),
mellerso@arches.uga.edu (Mike Ellerson KS4JU),
mikasa-nb@email.msn.com (Nick Bettis KR4MS),
pas@calc.vet.uga.edu (Pat Schroder KE4VRP),
wpscott@arches.uga.edu (Pat Scott KC4BDT),
pamsmith@arches.uga.edu (Pam Smith KE4WUA),
psmith@negia.net (Paul Smith N4CUA),
pbertot@arches.uga.edu (Pete Bertot KC4UL),
pdora@negia.net (Peter Dora AE4XH),
pkoehler@arches.uga.edu (Phil Koehler KE4TYV),
richard@athens.net (Richard Dickens KF4IRN),
matthews@elbert.k12.ga.us (Richard Matthews KR4OS),
ruff@negia.net (Ruff Smith KE4SVC),
ssikes@arches.uga.edu (Scott Sikes KD4MSR),
sbell@uga.cc.uga.edu (Steve Bell KD4GVX),
masons54@aol.com (Steve Mason KF4BDB),
kd4opw@arches.uga.edu (Trent Henderson KD4OPW),
uthomason@athens.net (Usher Thomason KN4WK),
strick@arches.uga.edu (Bill Strickland K4DX),
dmcelhannon@hotmail.com (Dave McElhannon KE4EOI),
kf4kgd@juno.com (Joshua Seymour KF4KGD),
tapcindy@sprynet.com (Tap Holland KF4WYQ),
jshrum@negia.net (Jack Shrum KF4GRZ),

hiramdvm@aol.com (Dwight Cochran K9ZLA),
w4epi@amsat.org (Steve Diggs W4EPI),
Wilbanks@prodigy.net (Mike Wilbanks KB4YEO),
jakins@ns.technonet.com (Buddy Akins AB4SN),
leesch337@aol.com (Lee Schramm W4DKA),
dbasinge@cviog.uga.edu (Mike Basinger),
w4ru@arrl.org (Sandy Donahue W4RU),
jcohoon@arches.uga.edu (Jack Cohoon, KE4YWM),
akp@akp.cc (Adrian Pritchett, KS4OS),
cmeadows@negia.net (Christopher Meadows KC4RWF),
kf4pcn@aol.com (Rodney, KF4PCN from Snellville),
jrhopper@worldnet.att.net (Jerry Hopper WB4CPL),
Matt.Temples@dot.state.ga.us (Matt Temples KE4WTZ)

From: D Bullard <dbullard@negia.net>
Subject: February Emitter forward

Matt completed the February Emitter but had trouble sending it to the list. I am forwarding it on to you for Matt. Another great job Matt! (Don, WA4IML)

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February 1999
Athens Radio Club
The Emitter
Next club meeting is Tuesday, February 2, 1999

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President - Ed Rollor, N4ZRA <erollor@merc.rx.uga.edu>
Vice President - James Reeves, KF4AQO <jlreeves@mindspring.com>
Secretary - Phil Koehler, KE4TYV <pkoehler@arches.uga.edu>
Treasurer - Paul Smith, N4CUA <psmith@negia.net
Public Information Officer - Dave McElhannon,,KE4EOI <dmcelhannon@hotmail.com>
Repeater Trustee - Bill Strickland,K4DX <strick@arches.uga.edu>
Executive Committee Member - Jeff Crowell,KD4AOZ

<dcrowell@arches.uga.edu>
Executive Committee Member - Richard Matthews,KR4OS

<matthews@elbert.k12.ga.us>
Executive Committee Member - Ed Riddle,N4ALE <edriddle@negia.net>
Executive Committee Member - Ken Schroder,N4NFI <kcs@rx.uga.edu>
Executive Committee Member - Tommy Strickland,KD4DTV

<twstrick@arches.uga.edu>
Public Service Coordinator - Bob Herrin, KE4JLL <berrin@bellsouth.net>
Emitter Editor - Matthew Temples, KE4WTZ <ke4wtz@yahoo.com>

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The Club President's QSO
Ed Rollor N4ZRA

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Disasters happen. Seems like a strange view to start off a new year. Some would even consider those who begin a year with a focus on disasters as fear mongers. The truth behind the matter is not that simple. In reality disasters do happen and those who have servant_s hearts and a mindset for preparedness want to be ready to meet the realities of this world. I am pleased with the desire of the Athens Radio Club members to humble themselves and to give their time to attend the American Red Cross training.

Those who attended the first training session know the value of preparedness and efficient and effective response. The desire to help others is a powerful motivator. Coupled with training, readiness, and camaraderie, the ability to respond becomes a unified effort.

The training session workbook asked some important personal questions: "What motivated me to take this course?" and "What experiences and skills do I bring to the Red Cross?" I suspect that our motivations may be similar, but our experiences and skills are very different. This is exactly the situation you want at the time of an emergency.

Over the years Amateur Radio Operators have proven to be a critical part of emergency services. Communication equipment and communication skills are just a part of the reason. Ham operators have proven themselves to be versatile, caring and willing participants. The extremely diverse knowledge and skill found in amateur operator groups such as ours is to our advantage at times of trouble.

I was impressed with the determination shown by our club members. Those present exhibited true courtesy to our speaker and listened to learn. Let's be honest, in the past we have not always applied ourselves as we did that evening. Our club understands the reason behind these efforts and no one wants to waste their time or anyone else's. Thanks to all who have set their goal on completing training.

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Athens Radio Club
January 5, 1999 Meeting Minutes
Philip Koehler, KE4TYV,
Secretary

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Ed Rollor, N4ZRI, the new ARC President for 1999 called the meeting to order with introduction of the 21 members and quests present. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as distributed in the Emitter. Paul, N4CUA, reported that the balance in the club treasury was $524.66. Members dues for 1999 are now due. Please get them to Paul Smith as soon as possible.

James, KF4AQO, reminded everyone to check into the 2M ARES net Sunday afternoons at 5:30PM for information concerning emergency communication developments involving Athens Radio Club.

Bob, AA4AI, reported for the ARC repeater committee that a small gain preamplifier might help the repeater slightly but that high gain would probably add so much interference as to be detrimental. A small pre-amp could be added to the repeater for about $30 but it he felt raising the antenna would be much more productive. No action was taken on the report.

Scott, KD4MSR reported that the last VE session resulted in one new license and 4 upgrades. The next VE test session will be at the ARC shack February 1 at 7PM.

Bob, KE4JLL, reported that the club has been active in public service recently with several races assisted. Dave, KD4STZ, reported that ARC members were to provide communications for the "Winter in Winterville " 5 mile run held on Saturday January 9. Members were to be at the Winterville depot at 8:15am for the 9:00 race. He displayed the nice long sleeve race T-shirt designed for this new race.

The president announced that the ARC Executive Committee will meet on Thursday, Jan. 7 and 7:00pm at the club shack. The new vice-president, James Reeves, introduced Steve Stringham, Emergency Coordinator for the Athens Chapter of the American Red Cross. Mr. Stringham presented the program, "Introduction to American Red Cross Disaster Services." This was the first of a three part training which will result in certification of ARC members who attend all three sessions as Red Cross "Disaster Assessment" officers. Disaster assessment teams make the first visit to disasters and advise the disaster coordinators of the extent of damage, amounts of medical, feeding, shelter, that will need to be secured for use by the direct assistance teams as they go into various areas. Those who missed the first session can make it up by viewing the video themselves. The next two sessions will be directed toward Disaster Assessment training specifically.
The meeting was adjourned at 9:45pm.

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Winterville Fun Run

Bob Herrin KE4JLL

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The Athens Radio Club provided communications for the Athens Track Club's First Annual Winter in Winterville Five Miler. The morning was cold and gray, with scattered sprinkles through the morning. At least 170 runners completed the race.
Participating from the club were: Paul Smith N4CUA, Dave KD4STZ, David McElhannon KE4EOI, Ed Roller N4ZRA and Sarah Roller, Ken Schroder N4NFI, Phil Koehler KE4TYV, and Bob Herrin KE4JLL..

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Georgia Skywarn Classes

Bob Herrin KE4JLL

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I know some of you may have received this with the Skywarn List but I want to be sure and get this out to everyone who may have not. Please be sure and pass this along. If you are in these areas, please talk it up! You may need a refresher, here it is. WE NEED ALL THE HAMS THAT WE CAN TO BE TRAINED IN THE SKYWARN CLASSES! THEY NEED OUR HELP, let's help them out!
Thanks
Robert Burton
KD4YDC
AEC ARES / NWS in Peachtree City
GA SKYWARN

Upcoming Spotter Classes

2/4/99 Basic Class
Troup County
LaGrange, GA
Time and Place T.B.A.
P.O.C. Richard Wullimon (706) 845-0375

2/9/99 at 6:30p.m. Advanced Class
Cherokee County
Sequoyah Regional Library

116 Brown Industrial Pkwy.
Canton, GA.
P.O.C. Al Westbrook (770) 736-2840

2/16/99 7:00p.m. Basic Class
Hall County
Georgia Mountian Center
301 Main St. (Main St. and Jesse Jewell Pkwy.)
Gainesville, GA
P.O.C. Rick or Gwen Darby (770) 967-6100

the spotter's class web page's main entrance is at
http://www.n9npp.com/spotter.htm

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Executive Committee Minutes
Jan. 7,1999
Ed Rollor N4ZRA

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On Jan. 7, 1999 the Executive Committee met and discussed several items of interest. One area that should be of interest to club members was the discussion concerning the club's repeater/antenna/tower situation. Ken Schroder (N4NFI) mentioned that we have been offered space on the Tallasseee Road Trunk Tower. This option will not be available until the Athens/Clarke County government has their Trunk system in place and debugged.

Since it would be preferable to keep the club repeater at its present location, other options were presented. Ed Riddle (N4ALE) supplied information on an intermodulation preamp that would help remove some of the noise and interference. The committee agreed to order the preamp and assigned Ed the job of assembling the kit. The kit will cost $59.95 plus shipping and tax. The preamp should be in operation by February. Increasing our present tower height was also considered. The committee assigned Jeff Crowell (KD4AOZ) the responsibility of determining costs of 1) a 100-ft. free standing tower, and 2) a 100-ft. guyed tower. Jeff was also asked to examine the club site to determine the best location for a tower and to make recommendations to the committee. Once these details have been determined, then we will proceed to ask the county for permission to increase our tower height.

Ed Rollor (N4ZRA) asked the committee to consider establishing a policy with Merial, LTD for use of the backup repeater. This backup repeater is an ARES resource and does not belong to the ARC. However, since the Merial repeater frequency pair is identical to the club's repeater there should be a procedure for switching repeaters in the time of emergencies. Lack of a policy and procedure could result in confusion and loss of valuable time. The last impression the Athens Radio Club needs to display in the time of trouble is confusion. Ed (N4ZRA) will contact Ed Fuqua (N4VHA) for more details concerning this backup repeater.

James Reeves (KF4AQO) pointed out that the American Red Cross might have more areas of training for the club if we are interested. The committee assigned James the task of discussing with Red Cross personnel the possibility of using our skills in other areas of emergency communication.

The packet LAN proposal was reviewed and the committee decided to not pursue this endeavor at this time. Ed Riddle (N4ALE) pointed out that the SEDAN packet system (145.770 MHz) is a good practical packet network that is already in use. Club member Jeff Crowell (KD4AOZ) has attempted to find a site in the Athens/Watkinsville area to establish a link for the Packet LAN, but has been unsuccessful. The committee wishes to extend thanks to Jeff for his efforts in researching this venture.

An outline for establishing an emergency plan was presented by Ed Rollor (N4ZRA). The outline was presented for examination and study by the committee and was not discussed in any detail. Executive Committee members agreed that an emergency plan needs to be established and decided to meet again next month (Feb. 15) to discuss this matter in more detail.

Paul Smith (N4CUA) reported that all IRS forms have been completed and returned. He does not anticipate any problems with our submission. Ed Rollor was assigned the task of reporting the minutes of the committee meeting in the next Emitter. Members present: Ed Riddle (N4ALE), Phil Koehler (KD4TYV), James Reeves (KD4AQO), David McElhannon (KE4EOI), Paul Smith (N4CUA), Bob Herrin (KE4JLL), Ken Schroder (N4NFI), Ed Rollor (N4ZRA).

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Scanner Corner

Bob Herrin KE4JLL

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(editor's note - I apologize for incorrectly identifying the author to last month's Scanner Corner article. It should have been listed as Bob Herrin who brought us this excellent article on the scanner hobby I apologize for this mix-up)

>From Communications Electronics North American Dealer News:

UNIDEN INTRODUCES NEW SCANNER CAPABLE OF AUTOMATICALLY DOWNLOADING CLOSEST 100 CHANNELS AND FREQUENCIES IN USERS4 ZIP CODE AND TRACKING MULTIPLE TRUNKED RADIO SYSTEMS.

Uniden America Corporation introduced at the 1999 Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, a new radio scanner that simplifies locating local channels and frequencies and tracking trunked radio systems.

The SmartScanner feature, available in the new handheld model, BC245XLT, enables users to easily download the closest 100 channels and frequencies available in a users_ zip code. The user simply connects the scanner to a modem with a special cable provided with the scanner. The scanner will then dial into a preprogrammed, toll-free number that identifies and automatically downloads the closest channels and frequencies.

"The SmartScanner feature eliminates the hassle of finding local channels and frequencies in a directory and loading them one by one," said John Harris, Uniden America Corporation_s Senior Vice President. Ken Ascher, Chairman & CEO of Communications Electronics said "It_s a terrific convenience for scanner users."

"The TrunkTracker(tm) II feature makes the BC245XLT able to track both GE/Ericsson and Motorola trunked radio systems. Previously Uniden introduced the TrunkTracker(tm) radio scanner--the first scanner capable of tracking a conversation as it jumped frequencies across Motorola trunked radio systems. Now TrunkTracker II enables scanner users to track conversations on trunked radio systems made by both

major system manufacturers.
"When a conversation changes frequencies on a Motorola or GE/Ericsson trunked radio system, TrunkTracker II automatically follows the conversation so users don_t have to manually change frequencies to find the rest of the transmission," Ascher said. "Again, it_s a revolutionary convenience for scanner users."
"The BC245XLT handheld radio scanner with both SmartScanner and TrunkTracker II technology will be available in July, 1999 for a suggested retail price of $499.95. In addition, Uniden plans to introduce the SC200 handheld radio scanner also featuring SmartScanner technology and an alphanumeric display in October, 1999. Ascher recommends to customers who want the earliest delivery of these new Bearcat scanners, to reserve their scanners now at the Communications Electronics (CEI) award winning secure web site at □http://www.usascan.com□. The CEI price for the BC245XLT is $269.95 plus shipping/handling. This was the same price as the popular BC235XLT when it was introduced by CEI in 1997. CEI welcomes all major credit cards which are not billed until the order is processed. For over thirty years, Uniden Master Distributor CEI has been marketing Bearcat scanners and other Uniden wireless products to government agencies, dealers and consumers throughout North America.

*** In addition to the information above, there was also a reference made to CEI's dealers that they should place their orders now for the following new models: BC244CLT, BC248CLT, BC278CLT, BC245XLT, BC780XLT, BC9500XLT, SC180B, SC200. No other information on these models was given, however more than a year ago I was told the 780XLT would be Uniden's version of a mobile TrunkTracker, and that the 9500XLT would be an upgrade of the 9000XLT to include an RS-232 port. A BC9000XLT with computer control will be an awesome radio.

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News From the Web
Matt Temples KE4WTZ

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AMATEUR RADIO OPERATORS PLAYED A MAJOR ROLE IN SPOTTING F5 TORNADO

Amateur radio operators played a major role in spotting the F5 tornado which ravaged Lawrence County on April 16, 1998. The Lawrence County Skywarn Net was activated on the W4RDM repeater (146.655) at 3:30pm and were among the first to report the tornado entering the county from the west.
The Skywarn Net operates in cooperation with the local Emergency Management Agency with net control operations residing at the Lawrence County Emergency Operations Center. Information provided by Skywarn was relayed to the National Weather Service Office in Nashville, and to media outlets in Lawrenceburg and Huntsville, Alabama.
Weather spotters first reported the tornado entering Lawrence County at 5:30pm and tracked the storm across the entire width of the county. Because the group is well known in the community, local fire departments and other county agencies monitor the Skywarn Repeater and were able to start emergency service personnel into the striken areas almost immediately. Once the tornado cleared the county, Skywarn began an immediate damage assesment and was immediately able to pinpoint the path of the tornado to within 200 yards. During this phase, at least two injured victims were discovered and with help summoned by way of

Amateur Radio.
Amateurs were again utilized on the following day (April 17th) to complete the formal damage assessment which eventually led to Lawrence County being named a Federal Disaster Area. Additionally, local spotters guided National Weather Service personnel through the damaged areas, causing the storm to be classified at least F4 (later upgraded to F5). In recognition ceremonies conducted on Tuesday April 21, Skywarn Members were credited with saving numerous lives in northern Lawrence County by providing early warning of the approaching storm. County Executive Ed Martin and Lawrenceburg Mayor Clayton Ezell commended the groups efforts and presented citations to those who aided in storm spotting activites.
Lawrence County Skywarn was formed in 1990 and provides major funding for the W4RDM repeater system. Still in development, the system currently has two receivers located at Lawrenceburg and near the Alabama state line with the transmitter located near Lawrenceburg. Access the repeater by transmitting on 146.055 (100.0 Hz north; 88.5 Hz south), receiving on 146.655. Plans call for additional receivers to be located in western and northern Lawrence County. Ron Mott (W4RDM) is the repeater operator.
Additional information about Lawrence County Skywarn may be found on the internet at <<www.usit.com/mottrd/swarn.htm>>

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The Digital Ham
Buck Rogers K4ABT
Digital Editor of CQ Magazine

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PACKET USERS NOTEBOOK

October 1997
by
Buck Rogers K4ABT

GOOD NEWS (we thought):

In June of 1995, I wrote my column in CQ Magazine that praised how great the ARRL was and how they had done a great job of procuring a group of frequencies that would enable us to build the Packet Radio Super Highway for the 21st century (digital Ham). A system of nodes in a network that would allow coast to coast communications that is as fast... maybe faster than the internet!

WHAT HAPPENED?

Here is a portion of the information that was in that June 1995 CQ Magazine PACKET USERS NOTEBOOK column.
>From the FCC & the ARRL

QST de W1AW
ARRL Bulletin 25 ARLB025
>From ARRL Headquarters
Newington CT March 17, 1995
To all radio amateurs

SB QST ARL ARLB025

ARLB025 Amateurs get 219 MHz

The FCC has released a Report and Order in ET Docket No. 93-40, allocating the 219 to 220 MHz band on a secondary basis to the Amateur Service for point-to-point fixed digital message forwarding systems. The allocation had been requested by the ARRL as partial compensation for the loss of the 220 to 222 MHz band.

When the new rules take effect, on a date that has not yet been announced,

Technician and higher class amateur licensees will be permitted to use digital emissions of up to 100 kHz bandwidth and no more than 50 watts PEP output. The primary occupant of the band is the Automated Maritime Telecommunications Systems (AMTS).

To protect the primary occupant, the ARRL has been designated as the national contact point for all amateur operations in the 219 to 220 Mhz band and is responsible for maintaining a database of all amateur operations in the band. All amateur stations must notify the ARRL at least 30 days prior to initiation of operations in the 219 to 220 Mhz band. Amateur stations within 50 miles of an AMTS coast station must obtain the written approval of the AMTS licensee prior to operating. Amateur stations within 398 miles of an AMTS coast station must notify the AMTS licensee in writing at least 30 days prior to initiation of operations. The ARRL will assist amateurs in fulfilling these requirements. Amateur stations operating in the 219 to 220 MHz band are not permitted to interfere with, nor are they protected from interference by, primary service operations in and adjacent to the band. The FCC action climaxes almost six years of effort by the ARRL.

END OF ARRL Bulletin 25 ARLB025

So it took a while longer than they thought, but in any case we now have some semblance for a set of nationwide backbone frequencies. The truth is that these frequencies are not going to be available to any and everyone who wishes to have one.

In addition to the requirements relating to the Automated Maritime Telecommunications Systems (AMTS), there are other considerations that must be taken into account. We can rest assured there will also be a time limit or period allowed for the applicant to install and have the node operating. Only a System Node Operator (SNO) who is ready to install a fully functional node on one of the frequency's will be granted coordination.

Notice that I stated that there would be a "time limit" allowed for an applicant to install a node, once it was approved.

I'm still a bit confused because I have yet to see, read, or hear about a node being approved for operation on these wonderful 100 kHz wide, 219 Mhz frequencies. Does anyone have any insight as to what happened? Did the ARRL forget it, did someone at the Internet threaten to commit sideways if the league went ahead with the move that would have given Amateur and Packet Radio the greatest shot-in-the-arm that had come along since the FM repeater?

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

And in 1995 I said, "Without building the bridge before the trench is dug, I should point out that no action will be taken until the ARRL has a full and comprehensive listing of all AMTS stations and locations. Further, there will be no purpose to contact the league until they release the full analysis and associated band plans."

Wow, how long does it take the ARRL and committee to work out the details?

So that you are aware of the frequencies that we are talking about, in table 1 below are the supporting frequencies for the ten wide-band (100 kHz) frequencies.

1	219.050	MHz	6	219.550	MHz
2	219.150	MHz	7	219.650	MHz
3	219.250	MHz	8	219.750	MHz
4	219.350	MHz	9	219.859	MHz
5	219.450	MHz	10	219.950	MHz

TABLE 1

The 100 kHz wide channels listed above are shown as "center frequency."

SO WE'RE ALL DRESSED UP, BUT NO PLACE TO GO:

So we have the platform for our Packet Radio "Limited-access Information Superhighway" but that bit of planning with regards to what vehicle we wish to use stopped. The Manufacturers don't know what to build or how many to build, because we have yet to see the final game-plan.

Is it because the league has no equipment capable of operating at speeds above 1200 bauds, or is it a problem for Harris to build another piece of gear for the league that the rest of us can't afford. I'm willing to bet that a couple of OEM's are sitting on "ready" to build a 219 MHz, 25 to 30 watt, wide-bandwidth transceiver that would enable the digital Amateur to talk (digital) voice or data, coast to coast as fast any internet provider...... or have I hit the very crux of the matter?

Could it be that someone got to ..... naw, that would be unethical!

GIMMIE A BREAK:

Where is that bandplan? What happened to the comprehensive listing of all AMTS stations and locations? Why are we becoming stagnant in Amateur radio while our hobby slowly migrates to other mediums than we presently have?

This is the way to preserve the future of Amateur radio, yet we have somehow managed to drop the ball at the most delicate moment. Just look at the list of Amateur radio distributors today and compare the list to only one year ago, the list continues to shrink.

I can see the mail now, but I have to say something. I have remained calm as long as I can. Please, someone up there who professes to provide leadership for the Amateur, get off top-dead-center and let's go forward while we can. The OEM's are ready, just ask them.

Think about it for a moment; If we had this network in place, we would see the trend change and a masses return to Amateur radio digital modes that would create a new demand for VHF and UHF radios that would in turn open some of the closed doors all over again. The fun would resemble the heyday of the seventies when FM repeaters opened a new world of mobile communications for the Ham on the move.

FOR OPENERS:

For openers; Where are all the transceivers that will pass sixty-four kilobits, or even 38,400 baud's? Let's give it a break and try for even 19,200 baud's. Wow, now there is a real number we can deal with, although a bit slow for the proposed bandwidth that was supposed to be available for us.... Almost three years ago.

Somehow we've learned the rounded numbers in multiples of 64 kb, like; 128k, 256k, 512k, 1024k, 2048k, and so on... up to 64 kb, or is it the other way around?. In there somewhere lies the 56 kb that fits into the scheme of things related to the 100 kHz band pass that we could have worked with.

For what ever it's worth, let's "get real" and try to fashion this Packet band plan into useable spectrum. A move on this vital issue should be soon!

I hope the ARRL will be hearing plenty of input and I pray they will be listening to the wisdom and judgment from those of us who remember what Packet was like a decade ago. We need the relief, and they hold the key to making it happen.

There are some who won't have the daring to make the following statement; I wish we could recall for a short period the days when Packet Radio first began. IF, as in "if" we could, the first thing I would change or add would be a rigid and unyielding band plan for our present day Packet networks. This is some of the "wisdom" that I refer to in the previous paragraph.

Now is the time, while the ten (10) channels of 100 kHz spectrum are new, to apply the "right-stuff." If not, then we may as well relegate these channels to the same archives as the 140 mile-per-gallon Tucker Carburetor.

PACKET RADIO IS FUN!

As a matter of interest, it was Kantronics and MFJ who came off top-dead-center and introduced some real 9600/19,200 (Kantronics) baud and 9600 (MFJ) baud data radios early on.

LET'S TALK ABOUT "HIGH-SPEED" "FROM 9600 BAUD'S TO 56 KILOBAUD:

We are interested in having fun, in digital communications, in speed.... so why hasn't some OEM come up with a decent transceiver that will deliver data... beginning with 9600 bauds... and upwards?

219 to 220 MHz is HERE:

Without making more noise about the needs and requirements of the digital ham, let's close this part of our quest by asking the OEM's to plan for the next Packet generation.. (but you may have to encourage the ARRL).

Have a product ready to market when the inevitable happens..... and at price a system node operator (SNO) can afford. 219 to 220 MHz is ready to harvest, but while the OEM is about it, let that wide bandwidth, data ready transceiver have an output power above 20 watts. Most of all, build it with the capability to cover all the frequencies that are available to the digital operator in the 219 to 220 and just to sweeten the deal, maybe allow it to cover the 223 to 225 Mhz band. Both the Packet Radio operator and the transceiver manufacturers will be served by this undertaking.

WE HAVE THE CLOUT AND THE MOMENTUM:

Having gathered the momentum and the numbers that gives us the prominence to exert influence, it's time I make it known to the ARRL that we need them to move on the release of the band plan and the invitation to apply for the high-speed, Packet backbone frequencies at 219 MHz. When the ARRL does their part, we will comply in turn!
So many times you, the readers, have written asking that I be a more vocal
conduit for you. This column is attempting to do just that. I've been guilty of not saying the things the readers have been saying to me all along. If this months column is not heard, then I've at least tried to make your letters, calls, and e-mails known. If the cry is heard and something good comes from it, then by all means, let the league know that you appreciate their action .

Happy Packeting de BucK4ABT e-mail k4abt@sedan.org
Visit the SEDAN Packet Radio Networking Pages at; http:/www.sedan.org

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>From The Editor - Matthew Temples
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Between now and next month_s issue I am going to be attempting an experiment with how the Emitter is delivered via the computer. To date, the Emitter arrives in your e-mail box simply as a text document, just words with no club pictures, clip art, or links to club events. The Grand Experiment I am going to try is to build a web page for just the Emitter that is completely navigable. (is that a word??) Anyway, I would appreciate you thoughts and opinions on this project. Don_t hesitate to say yeah or nay. Do you like the current method of how the Emitter is delivered as just plain text? Or, would you like to get an e-mail announcing that the current issue is ready to be browsed, and then go there to view the Emitter, complete with pictures of you and your friends from the club?

So, please take time to drop me an e-mail between now and then to let me know how you feel about it. This is your newsletter, so let me know what you think.

Thank-you for your time.
Matt KE4WTZ

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KE4WTZ
Matthew L. Temples
965 Bio Lane
Hartwell, GA 30643

DO YOU YAHOO!?
Get y--

(706)-376-1826 <home> <ke4wtz@yahoo.com>
(770)-718-5009 <work) <Matt.Temples@dot.state.ga.us>